

Morton, PA - Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) met with Delaware County School District Superintendents and representatives from the Delaware County Intermediate Unit (DCIU) to discuss challenges that schools are facing in light of the current economic environment. In total, officials representing 17 school districts throughout Delaware County attended the meeting including Barbara DiMarino Superintendent of Chichester School District, George Steinhoff of Penn-Delco, Nick Ignatuk of Ridley, Rudy Rubeis of Wallingford-Swarthmore, Jim Capolupo of Springfield, Bill Keilbaugh of Haverford, Merle Horowitz of Marple-Newtown, Jerry Parker, President of the Delaware County Community College, and Dr. Larry O'Shea, Executive Director of the DCIU. Topics of focus included the economic challenges facing the schools, and the federal efforts to address them in the Economic Stimulus Bill and TARP. Also addressed were the continuing attempts to reauthorize No Child Left Behind, and programs such as Pay for Performance and "Growth Models".

The House of Representatives is expected to hold a full house vote on Wednesday or Thursday for the Economic Stimulus Bill. "It is important that we put people to work building 21st century classrooms, labs, and libraries to help our kids compete," the Congressman said. \$20 billion, including \$14 billion for K-12 and \$6 billion for higher education, will be directed for building renovation and modernization, including technology upgrades and energy efficiency improvements. The Economic Stimulus Bill also includes \$25 million to help charter schools build, obtain, and repair schools. \$1 billion is allocated for the building of 21st century classrooms, including computer and science labs and teacher technology training.

The other programs supported by the Economic Stimulus Bill are IDEA Special Education, and Title 1 Help for Disadvantaged Kids. For IDEA, \$13 billion is set aside for formula grants in order to increase the federal share of special education costs and prevent these mandatory costs from forcing states to cut other areas of education. For Title I, \$13 billion will be used for grants to help disadvantaged kids in nearly every school district and more than half of all public schools reach high academic standards.

The Economic Stimulus Bill will also provide \$13 billion for formula grants to increase the federal share of special education costs and prevent these mandatory costs from forcing states to cut other areas of education; \$13 billion for grants to help disadvantaged kids in nearly every school district and more than half of all public schools reach high academic standards; \$250 million for competitive grants to states to design and develop data systems that analyze individual student data to find ways to improve student achievement, providing teachers and administrators with effective tools; \$300 million, including \$200 million for competitive grants to school districts and states to provide financial incentives for teachers and principals who raise student achievement and close the achievement gaps in high-need schools; and, \$100 million

for competitive grants to states to address teacher shortages and modernize the teaching workforce, commits the necessary capital to programs that have a track record of success.

During the meeting, the Congressman also discussed the growth model as an efficient alternative to assessing states and school's adequate yearly progress (AYP). The Congressman hopes to bring about the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), including giving credit to states and schools for the progress that their students make over time through the use of growth models. It will continue to place strong emphasis on reading and math skills, but it will also allow states to use more than their reading and math test results to determine how well schools and students are doing, in order to assess student learning and school performance more fairly, comprehensively, and accurately. For high schools, one measure will be graduation rates. Finally, the legislation will drive improvements in the quality and appropriateness of the tests used for accountability. This is especially important for English language learners and students with disabilities, who will continue to be included in the accountability system.

Tuition is up, unemployment is up, and as a result more people are choosing to go to school to upgrade their skills and more of these students need student aid. This investment addresses those short term needs while investing in our nation's future economic strength. For Pell Grants, \$15.6 billion will be allotted to increase the maximum Pell Grant by \$500, from \$4,850 to \$5,350; for college work-study, \$490 million to support undergraduate and graduate students who work; a Student Loan Limit Increase will increase limits on unsubsidized Stafford loans by \$2,000; and \$2.1 billion to Head Start to provide comprehensive development services to help 110,000 additional children succeed in school. Funds are distributed based on need. Only about half of all eligible preschoolers and less than 3 percent of eligible infants and toddlers participate in Head Start. Congressman is also concerned about how individuals are acclimating.

"It was important to meet with representatives from the schools to learn how they are acclimating to the current crisis. This meeting allowed us to share thoughts and opinions prior to the Education and the Economy Summit. Meeting with these individuals prior to the Summit will allow us to structure the best and most informative event possible."

### **Important Upcoming Events:**

#### **Education and the Economy Summit**

This event will bring together local-area educators, business leaders, policy directors, school districts, and others interested in improving education in our region and nation. There will be panel discussions on Early Childhood Education, Special Education, Middle & High School Education, and the intersection of these programs with the needs and expectations of businesses and institutions of higher learning. Following these discussions, there will be a breakout session to discuss the implementation of the 7th Congressional District's Business and Education Secure Tomorrow Together (BESTT) program. This program partners local

businesses with area middle schools to provide students and parents the experience and opportunities needed to make informed career selection choices.

Monday, February 2nd

Registration begins at 8 AM

Panels will run from 8:30 until 12:15 followed by lunch and approximately 2 hours for the breakout groups.

Delaware County Intermediate Unit (DCIU)

Education Service Center, Rooms 171-2

200 Yale Avenue

Morton, PA 19070

Phone: (610) 938-9000

Grant Symposia

Congressman Joe Sestak has scheduled forums to provide important information about obtaining federal, state and private resources. At the forums, Congressman Sestak will give an overview of the appropriations process and discuss the importance of, as well as best practices for, applying for all types of grants. In addition, he will provide a copy of the Second Edition of the Pennsylvania 7th Congressional District Grant and Resource Directory, a one-stop shop for learning about opportunities to secure project funding. Last year's edition was the first known to be compiled by a Congressional office.

Meeting for all interested private individuals and private, non-profit, and other organizations:

Delaware County Community College

Academic Building

Great Auditorium

Room # 2225

901 South Media Line Road

Media, PA 19063

Saturday January 31st

12-1PM

If you have questions regarding these events, please call Susan Heppler at 610-892-8623 or [susan.heppler@mail.house.gov](mailto:susan.heppler@mail.house.gov)

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking*

*former military officer ever elected to the Congress.*

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